

# Housing Program Promotes Sense of Community

Civil Engineering's Building Thriving Housing Communities Strategy supports Airmen and their families in the "Year of the Air Force Family" and beyond.

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In declaring July 2009 to July 2010 as the "Year of the Air Force Family," the Secretary of the Air Force, Mr. Michael B. Donley, and the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, Gen Norton Schwartz, challenged the Air Force to initiate programs to assess gaps, and look for better ways to support and improve the lives of Air Force families and single Airmen.

Civil Engineering's "Building Thriving Housing Communities Strategy" answers this challenge. The strategy was unveiled at the Professional Housing Management Association - Professional Development Seminar XXII in February 2010 by Maj Gen Timothy Byers, The Civil Engineer.

For Air Force housing professionals, the concept of a "sense of community" is not new. Programs in Civil Engineering have led the change with affordable and updated housing facilities through the housing privatization, MILCON, and O&M programs.

In developing the strategy, Civil Engineering's housing experts defined a "thriving community" as a safe, secure place for Airmen and their families to work, live, and play comfortably, with access to quality schools, healthcare, child care, dining, and other support services.

The strategy's vision is to develop and promote an Air Force-unique sense of community on our installations.

The strategy's action plan is divided into four objective areas:

- **Housing Community Focused Policies**  
Modify and build on existing policies to make Civil Engineering housing programs promote and support the Air Force's sense of community and provide responsive customer service.
- **Aggressive Communication and Marketing Strategy**  
Put customers first by providing all current and potential customers with proactive and consistent messaging to ensure they receive targeted communications about available housing options.

- **Effective Training and Education Programs**  
Ensure all stakeholders receive enhanced training and education that is supportive of their needs and communicates the same set of standards for all involved in housing.
- **Executable Housing/Dorm and Community Amenities Facility Program**  
Provide quality houses, dormitories, and community amenities (e.g., parks, playgrounds, running trails, community centers, pools, etc.) that create an inclusive environment where Airmen and their families want to live.

As 2010 continues, Civil Engineering is committed to the success of the Building Thriving Housing Communities Strategy, in this Year of the Air Force Family and beyond. Delivering superb housing support to Airmen and their families ensures that we "Build to Last ... Lead to Change."

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*Ms. Teague is a contractor providing support to the Housing Operations Program, the Office of The Civil Engineer, the Pentagon, Washington, D.C.*



Children at Keesler AFB's Child Development Center meet Sparky the Fire Dog during Fire Prevention Week. (photo by Ms. Kemberly Groue)